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UMMRA Info

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University of Minnesota, Morris Retirees' Association

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UMMRA INFO

THE UNIVERSITY OF MINNESOTA, MORRIS RETIREES ASSOCIATION NEWSLETTER
VOLUME V, NUMBER 2, FALL 2002

CHANCELLOR'S GREETING

Greetings to the members of the UMMRA at the start of the 2002-03 Academic Year.

As always, our College repopulates itself in the fall. This year we have an unusually large number of new tenure-track faculty, as well as many important new staff members. They look to be a very promising group, although they appear to be getting startlingly younger each year! Our class of first year students is about the same size it was last year, with quality (at least as measured by the ACT and class rank) up a bit.

This year promises to be another interesting and important one on campus and off. Here in Morris, events range from the "formal" opening of the renovated Science building at Homecoming on September 21, to the completion of our portion of the all-University Capital Campaign in June. This year will probably be the last in which our men's and women's intercollegiate athletic teams compete as members of the NSIC and of Division II of the NCAA, as we move into our transition to Division III and the Upper Midwest Athletic Conference.

Perhaps even more dramatically, the coming months will see some major shifts within the University of Minnesota, and in our State's executive and legislative branches. Minnesota will be electing a new Governor, and somewhere between 25% and a third of our House of Representatives and Senate will also be neophytes. Obviously, given the race for Governor, both houses of the Legislature will have new leadership, as will most of the key higher education committees and sub-committees.

And, of course, the University will be searching for a new President, as Bob Bruininks serves as Interim President, and Christine Maziar begins her term as Executive Vice President and Provost.

During the time of transitions and new faces, it will be even more important than usual for UMM to speak with one voice, and one persuasive voice at that, about our core mission of providing an undergraduate liberal arts education of uncompromising excellence within the public sector. We need to keep our focus, and we will need to communicate to a range of new constituents the unique and important character of our history and mission. In this effort, retirees can certainly play a central role.

In advance, thanks for your continued support of UMM. I look forward to working with you once again in this coming Academic Year.

Sam

Samuel Schuman

Chancellor

The University of Minnesota, Morris

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FALL LUNCHEON MEETING

The fall luncheon meeting of UMMRA will be held at Prairie Inn on Wednesday, October 16 at 11:45 a.m. We will order pay-your-own lunch from the menu. Randee Hokanson, Director of the Stevens County Historical Museum, will share her enthusiasm for the museum with us and bring us up-to-date on their building plans.

New board member, Harold Fahl, is making plans for the annual Spring Luncheon/Reunion which, as always, will be held on the same day as the Recognition Dinner. Final information will be in the winter UMMRA INFO. He would appreciate ideas for afternoon activities at 320-634-5692.

DUES—MEMBERSHIP

Ellen Ordway reports that we have 73 paid members for 2002-2003, but more tend to join during the year. However, only the summer UMMRA INFO is now sent to all UMM retirees, so please check with your retiree friends if they have renewed their membership. The extra dues income will help make our office more useful to members.

ONE DAY CAR TRIP TO TERRACE

On Wednesday, June 19, a group of UMMRAs visited the village of Terrace. Mr. Greenfield, owner of the home and restaurant, opened his 1860 era home to us. He has kept the house much as it was when it was built. It includes the luxury of an inside "outhouse" and a special window built to accommodate the bringing in of a casket. We had lunch on "The Porch" overlooking the serene lake and then visited Merlin Peterson's gallery of fine and performing arts where concerts are held every Friday evening during the summer months. The final treat was a tour of the Terrace Mill with tour guide Mary Henrickson who told us about the history of the Mill. Terrace is a special place that makes for a fun day.

FALL CAR TRIP PLANS

Avis Brandt is putting together information for a one-day car trip to Milan, MN during October or November. Discussion of concrete plans will be on the agenda at the fall luncheon, but Avis would appreciate ideas before the meeting if you have them. Her number is 320-589-3304.

UMRA UPDATE

The University of Minnesota Retirees Association, Twin Cities, held their first meeting of the 2002-2003 year on Tuesday, September 24. Speakers were Wendy Pradt Lougee, University of Minnesota Librarian and Dann Chapman, Director of Employee Benefits and Director of Health Programs. Chapman's topic was "Health Coverage, 2003". If you'd like to be a member of the Twin Cities group remember all UMM retirees are eligible to join. The dues are \$20 for an

individual and \$25 for a couple. Send the dues to Robert Plunkett, Treasurer, 1920 South 1st Street, Apt. 1401, Mpls., MN., 55454. Members receive a monthly newsletter.

Several UMM retirees attended the spring gala dinner of UMRA on June 25, 2002 on the Minneapolis campus. Jack and Lucy Imholte, Lisa Gumpel, and Bettina Blake formed a UMM "cheering section" for the induction of former UMM Chancellor David Johnson as the 2002-2003 President of UMRA. In his brief acceptance speech, Dave promised to encourage cooperation with all parts of the University and to continue to work on retiree health benefits. The evening's program was a delightful one; a live band played old style tunes before dinner and then C. Lance Brockman, the professor of theatre who spearheaded the acquisition and renovation of a new University Showboat, showed slides and discussed the way that the showboat revival was achieved.

Perhaps next summer we could plan a trip to a Sunday afternoon Showboat performance with an early afternoon brunch and invite UMRA members to join us. How about it?

ART DURKEE—COUGAR HALL OF FAME

UMM retiree Art Durkee of Morris was inducted into the Cougar Hall of Fame during Homecoming on September 20, 2002 at the UMM Alumni Association Annual Awards Dinner. Art drove the UMM players' bus from 1972 to 1997. A very complimentary article was in the August 15 Morris Sun Tribune and will be kept in the UMMRA file.

2003 HEALTH INSURANCE COVERAGE

The Board of Regents approved the University's new health benefits program for its retirees and open enrollment for the new plan offering is scheduled to begin October 16 and will run through November 15. To assist retirees, Employee Benefits is holding a Health Benefit Forum at UMM on September 26 from 2:00 to 4:00 p.m. at the Cougar Room, Student Center. On September 19, you should have received a letter from the Employee Benefits Office announcing the meeting and answering some questions. Morris campus retirees can get coverage through Blue Cross/Blue Shield or Medica Prime Solution. Stevens Community Medical Center and Prairie Medical Associates will accept both policies. The monthly premiums for Blue Cross/Blue Shield will be \$352.74; the premiums for Medica will be \$254.00. (See letter from Employee Benefits for further clarification.)

The following answers were taken from the June 2002 UMRA Newsletter. "Thank you" to Ted Litman, UMRA Representative and member of the Benefits Advisory Committee, for all his good information.

1. The \$10,000 annuity policy remains in effect and continues to pay a reasonably high rate of interest to its policyholders.
2. All current and future University retirees and their dependents, 65 years of age and over, who are covered under Medicare Parts A and B are eligible for the new plan. However, if you dropped your coverage or choose not to join the plan, you are not permitted to return.
3. The deductible and co-pays should be the same as last year under the State Plan.

4. Premiums continue to go up because of the high cost of prescription drug coverage, which accounted for an estimated 50% of the increase for next year.
5. The University will offer broadened dental health coverage. It will include coverage of implants, with a higher maximum limit.
6. Financial assistance from the University for retiree health insurance has been designated as a prime agenda item by the retiree health subcommittee and plan to continue pursuing this issue with the administration.

REGIONAL FITNESS CENTER UPDATE

The fall schedule at RFC for retirees is listed on page 9 of the black and orange RFC Brochure, Fall 2002. A notice was sent to retirees by e-mail that the cut off date for receiving university contribution toward your RFC membership was September 13, 2002. They have decided to extend that deadline to October 1 when they found out that this newsletter is the only notice that the majority of retirees would receive. The contribution is only given to UMMRA members, and only to UMM retirees, not their spouses. To get the 50% contribution you need to take your paid membership card to Mary Zosel at the Chancellor's office, pay the remaining share of membership and fill out a UMM Corporate Membership Verification form which you take to the RFC. Membership runs from Sept. 1 to Aug. 31 and should be the same for next year. Reminder will be in the 2003 UMMRA INFO.

LEARNING UNLIMITED—HERITAGE PRESERVERS

The Heritage Preservers series is now under a larger program called Learning Unlimited which is coordinated by Community Education. Their slogan is "A commitment to continuous learning for older adults in our community." Learning Unlimited is still in its early planning stage as they are hiring a new coordinator for this year. Heritage Preservers has a tentative program which features environmental concerns for the National Issues Forums and Women in History for the other events. Watch for dates and more particulars in the winter UMMRA INFO and the Morris Sun Tribune. Fred Farrell is the 2003 grant project director.

PRESIDENT'S CORNER

We are well established in our office space in the Community Services Building. Thanks to the generosity of Chancellor Schuman, our computer will be hooked up so that retirees can send and receive e-mail and have access to the web.

Each year goals need to be set for any organization. A major goal for me, and the UMMRA Board, is to urge each of you to give serious consideration to a 2 year commitment as a member of the UMMRA Board. Over time, if we can all do this, we will continue to have a vibrant association with UMM and the Morris community.

I look forward to working with all of you again.

Fred

SEE YOU AT THE LUNCHEON ON OCTOBER 16 AND WORKING OUT AT THE RFC!!!!!!

Fred's message Office information or volunteer committee

